



7 May 2007

Death of a US Servicemember

1. This past weekend, an Army Soldier was struck and killed by a motor vehicle. When the death occurred, the Soldier was walking alone at night along a road and had no battle buddy covering his flanks. This troubles me as it represents a very serious problem—one that demands immediate commander and leader attention.
2. This accident is still under investigation; however, we know that fatal pedestrian accidents often occur where darkness and alcohol use are factors. Although alcohol use has not been determined as a factor in this accident due to the ongoing investigation, it is important that leaders enforce responsible alcohol consumption, safe pedestrian practices, and the importance of the buddy system for all our Servicemembers.
3. Although the consumption of alcohol—within limits—is legal, the diminished situational awareness and reduced functional coordination associated with alcohol consumption make us vulnerable to making deadly mistakes. The bottom line is that alcohol kills! We all have the responsibility to ensure that our consumption does not affect our well-being or the well-being of anyone else. This is what taking care of each other is about. See [USFK Policy Letter #6, Buddy System](#). Team Work Counts!
4. The act of walking along or crossing streets can be dangerous anywhere, even under the best circumstances. However, special attention is required by pedestrians when negotiating the roads of the Republic of Korea. Pedestrians should focus on the following safety points:
 - Always have your buddy with you. Watch out for and take care of each other.
 - Ensure that you are clearly visible during the night. Always wear lightly colored clothes or reflective clothing.
 - Do not walk in the road but on the sidewalk. If there is no sidewalk, walk well off the road, facing the oncoming traffic.
 - Avoid walking along roads at all times if you have consumed any alcohol. Alcohol and drugs impair your ability to walk safely, just as they do a person's ability to drive.
 - When crossing a road where there is a pedestrian bridge or crosswalk, use the pedestrian bridge or crosswalk, even if it means walking further.
 - Never run across a road without looking both ways, and check that there is no traffic before crossing a road.
 - Never assume that you have been seen—many distractions can take the attention of the motorist. Be wary. Most drivers are nice people, but don't count on them paying attention.
 - Never leave children unaccompanied next to a road.
 - When crossing a road, do not walk halfway across—remain beside the road until both lanes are clear.
5. Leaders—Enforce the buddy system! All Servicemembers, Civilians, and Family members must be involved in accident prevention. I call on everyone to maintain vigilance during this summer season and abide by our [USFK Summer Safety Campaign](#).

We go together!

B. B. BELL
General, US Army
Commander

FREEDOM'S FRONTIER!

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